

Message Text

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13

ACTION OC-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 NEA-05 ADP-00 CCO-00 SY-07 L-03 M-03

A-01 OPR-02 ST-01 /035 W

----- 008668

O 091055 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7569

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1840

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, ACOM, OTRA, IS, JO

SUBJECT: COURIER SERVICE ACROSS JORDAN RIVER

REF: AMMAN 1185

1. IN VIEW OF REFTEL, WE HAVE NOW GONE BACK TO FONMIN AND INFORMED THEM AS FOLLOWS:

A. TRIP WE HAD PROPOSED FOR MAR 12 IS NOW POSTPONED. WE REQUEST CONCURRENCE GOI FOR FUTURE COURIER RUNS BEGINNING MONDAY MAR 19.

B. COURIER RUNS FOR SOLE PURPOSE OF CARRYING COURIERS AND THEIR DIPLOMATIC POUCHES, WILL OPERATE FROM AMMAN TO JERUSALEM AND RETURN WITH EMBASSY AMMAN VEHICLES. CROSSING TO WEST BANK WILL BE APPROX 1100 HOURS EACH MONDAY AND TO EAST BANK 1100 HOURS EACH TUESDAY. WE EXPLAINED HOW THESE TIMES TIE IN WITH TEL AVIV- FRANKFURT COURIER SERVICE.

C. WE WILL INFORM GOI IN ADVANCE EACH TIME LICENSE PLATE NUMBER OF CAR AND NAMES AND PASSPORT NUMBERS OF TWO OCCUPANTS. FONMIN SAID COURIERS MUST HAVE DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS. WE CONFIRMED THEY WOULD AND WOULD ALSO CARRY COURIER LETTER DESIGNATING BOTH PASSENGERS AS COURIERS.

D. WE SAID WE WOULD GIVE GOI OFFICIAL ASSURANCE THAT VEHICLE WOULD CONTAIN NOTHING EXCEPT TWO COURIERS, DIPLOMATIC POUCHES AND PERSONAL BAGGAGE OF COURIERS NECESSARY FOR THEIR OVERNIGHT STAY IN JERUSALEM. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, WE REQUESTED
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THAT FORMALITIES AT BRIDGE BE LIMITED TO EXAMINATION OF PASSPORTS AND COURIER LETTER AND THAT VEHICLE NOT RPT NOT BE SUBJECTED TO ANY SEARCH. FONMIN REPLY WAS THAT THIS COULD NOT BE AGREED TO. GOI IN NO WAY QUESTIONS BONA FIDES OF USG OR COURIERS CONCERNED, BUT BEARS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY AND MUST THEREFORE TAKE STEPS TO ASSURE ITSELF THERE ARE NO BOMBS, EXPLOSIVES OR OTHER DANGEROUS ITEMS IN OR ATTACHED TO VEHICLES CROSSING BRIDGE. MINISTRY POINTED OUT IT NOT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ILL- INTENTIONED PERSONS TO GAIN ACCESS TO VEHICLES DURING NIGHT BEFORE TRIP IS MADE AND AFFIX EXPLOSIVES TIME TO GO OFF AFTER BRIDGE IS CROSSED OR WHEN VEHICLE IS IN JERUSALEM. INCENTIVE TO TRY THIS ON EMBASSY AMMAN VEHICLE WOULD BE INCREASED IF IT BECAME KNOWN, AS IT WOULD, THAT VEHICLES BEING PASSED WITHOUT SEARCH. ESPECIALLY IN THESE TIMES OF WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE AND BOMBING, GOI CANNOT RELINQUISH ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY. WE INQUIRED WHAT GOI PRACTICE MAY BE REGARDING UN, CHURCH OR OTHER VEHICLES WHICH CROSS BRIDGE AND WE WERE GIVEN CATEGORICAL ASSURANCE THAT TREATMENT ACCORDED U. S. VEHICLE WILL BE NO LESS FAVORABLE THAN THAT ACCORDED ANY OTHER VEHICLE.

2. WE MADE STRONGEST CASE WE COULD FOR GOI CONCURRENCE IN EXACTLY WHAT EMBASSY AMMAN HAS STATED IT DESIRES. IF APPROVAL ON OTHER POINTS IS FORTHCOMING, WE RECOMMEND NO FURTHER RAISING WITH GOI OF QUESTION OF SEARCH OF VEHICLE. TO EXTENT THIS IS DISCRETIONARY ON OUR PART, WE CANNOT SEE ANY REASON WHATSOEVER TO OBJECT TO SEARCH. IF DEPT BELIEVES IT IS LEGALLY IMPOSSIBLE (PARA 2 AMMAN 1070) FOR USG TO ACQUIESCE IN SEARCH OF VEHICLE, REQUEST DEPT INFORM US AT ONCE OF GROUNDS AND WE WILL MAKE FURTHER APPROACH TO GOI. WE MUST SAY, HOWEVER, THAT WE THINK GOI WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CHANGE THEIR STAND AND WE OURSELVES WOULD NOT WANT TO BE IN POSITION OF TRYING TO GET GOI TO RELAX SECURITY MEASURES WHEN WE ARE, AT SAME TIME, TRYING TO GET THEM TO JOIN US IN IMPROVING SIMILAR SECURITY MEASURES ALL AROUND THE WORLD.

3. REQUEST AMMAN INFORM US BY EARLY NEXT WEEK OF VEHICLE NUMBER, NAMES, PASSPORT NUMBERS, ETC. IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT COURIER RUN NOT RPT NOT BE USED WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO ISRAELIS FOR ANY PURPOSE WHATSOEVER OTHER THAN CARRIAGE OF POUCHES AND COURIERS. I. E., NO OTHER PASSENGERS, NO PACKAGES, ETC.

ZURHELLEN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinjw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TELAV01840
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730326/aaaahojy.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IMSO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 AMMAN 1185
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 FEB 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <09-Aug-2001 by izenbei0, 3.4.X6, 3.4.X9>; RELEASED <21 FEB 2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <21 FEB 2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 971121
Subject: COURIER SERVICE ACROSS JORDAN RIVER
TAGS: ACOM, OTRA, PBOR, PFOR, IS, JO
To: AMMAN
FRANKFURT
JERUSALEM
OC
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005